Status of the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

1.   *(previously presented)* A method for maintaining synchronization in a communication system wherein a central entity transmits a signal containing timing information to one or more remote devices, the one or more remote devices using the timing information for scheduling transmissions, the method comprising:

synchronizing a first symbol clock of a first downstream transmitter in the central entity and a second symbol clock of a second downstream transmitter in the central entity;

transmitting a first downstream signal using the first downstream transmitter in the central entity to the one or more remote devices, wherein the first downstream signal includes timing information based on the first symbol clock;

terminating transmission of the first downstream signal; and

transmitting a second downstream signal using the second downstream transmitter in the central entity to the one or more remote devices, wherein the second signal includes timing information based on the second symbol clock.

2.   *(original)* The method of claim 1, further comprising:

transmitting a notification message to the one or more remote devices indicating that the first signal will be terminated prior to the termination of transmission of the first signal.

3-8.   *(canceled).*

9.   *(previously presented)* An apparatus in a communication system, the apparatus comprising:

a first downstream transmitter configured to transmit a first downstream signal to one or more remote devices, wherein the first downstream signal includes first timing information based on a first symbol clock of the first downstream transmitter;

a second downstream transmitter configured to transmit a second downstream signal to the one or more remote devices, wherein the second downstream signal includes second timing information based on a second symbol clock of the second downstream transmitter; and

a synchronization element configured to synchronize the first symbol clock and the second symbol clock.

10.   *(previously presented)* The apparatus of claim 9, wherein the first downstream transmitter is configured to transmit a notification message to the one or more remote devices indicating that the first downstream signal will be terminated prior to a termination of transmission of the first downstream signal.

11.   *(original)* The apparatus of claim 9, wherein the apparatus is a cable modem termination system (CMTS).

12-19. *(canceled).*

20.   *(previously presented)* The method of claim 1, wherein the transmitting the second downstream signal is performed after the terminating.

21.   *(previously presented)* The method of claim 1, wherein the synchronizing comprises adjusting one or more of the first and second symbol clocks to align the first symbol clock to the second symbol clock.

22.   *(previously presented)* The method of claim 1, wherein the synchronizing comprises measuring a magnitude of a misalignment of the first symbol clock and the second symbol clock.

23.   *(previously presented)* The method of claim 22, further comprising transmitting calibration information relating to the misalignment to the one or more remote devices.

24.   *(previously presented)* The method of claim 1, wherein the first downstream signal further includes data relating to a forward error correction (FEC) alignment of the first downstream signal.

25.   *(previously presented)* The method of claim 1, wherein the second downstream signal further includes data relating to a FEC alignment of the second downstream signal.

26.   *(previously presented)* The method of claim 1, wherein the FEC alignment of the second downstream signal is synchronized to the FEC alignment of the first downstream signal.

27.   *(previously presented)* The method of claim 1, further comprising transmitting FEC calibration information based on the FEC alignment of the first downstream signal and the FEC alignment of the second downstream signal.

28.   *(previously presented)* The apparatus of claim 9, wherein the second downstream transmitter is further configured to transmit the second downstream signal in response to a termination of transmission of the first downstream signal.

29.   *(previously presented)* The apparatus of claim 9, wherein the synchronization element is configured to synchronize the first symbol clock and the second symbol clock by adjusting one or more of the first and second symbol clocks to align the first symbol clock to the second symbol clock.

30.   *(previously presented)* The apparatus of claim 9, wherein the synchronization element is configured to synchronize the first symbol clock and the second symbol clock by measuring a magnitude of a misalignment of the first symbol clock and the second symbol clock.

31.   *(previously presented)* The apparatus of claim 30, wherein the second timing information further includes calibration information relating to the misalignment to the one or more remote devices.

32.   *(previously presented)* The apparatus of claim 9, wherein the first downstream signal further includes data relating to a forward error correction (FEC) alignment of the first downstream signal.

33.   *(previously presented)* The apparatus of claim 9, wherein the second downstream signal further includes data relating to a FEC alignment of the second downstream signal.

34.   *(previously presented)* The apparatus of claim 9, wherein synchronization element is further configured to synchronize the FEC alignment of the second downstream signal to the FEC alignment of the first downstream signal.

35.   *(previously presented)* The apparatus of claim 9, wherein synchronization element is further configured to generate calibration information based on the FEC alignment of the first downstream signal and the FEC alignment of the second downstream signal.

36.   *(previously presented)* The apparatus of claim 9, wherein at least one of the first downstream signal and the second downstream signal further includes FEC calibration information based on the FEC alignment of the first downstream signal and the FEC alignment of the second downstream signal.